The Number of People Living In Poverty

The U.S. Census Bureau’s most recently released statistics on poverty reveal that in 2006 there were 36.5 out of 300 million people living in poverty (US Census Bureau News, 2007). The definition of living in poverty varies according to the members and ages of those in a particular household. Different thresholds are set for different family sizes. For example, a family with two parents and three children has a different threshold compared to a family with a single parent and three children. A household that includes a person over the age of 65 also has a different threshold than a household without an older family member. The number 36.5 million is a significant structure number because it shows that a huge number of people in our country are living without enough money to adequately meet their everyday needs. This number shapes our society, even though those living in poverty are invisible to many.

The 36.5 million in this category affect our society by being in the position they are in. If a person or family is living in poverty, it affects their ability to have adequate health care, insurance, and education. The US Census Bureau reports that the number living poverty declined by .3 percent in the past year, however, the number without health insurance has increased. This may indicate that though the reported numbers show a decline in people living within the specific definition of “poverty”, the number of people still living without adequate funds to provide for their families such things as health insurance is still far too high. Without adequate healthcare or insurance, these families may put off regular checkups, and end up costing society more when major
health problems arise. Those living in poverty are more likely to have unhealthy lifestyles and also greater stress in their lives arising from their financial worries; both of which will add to later medical problems and bills. A family living in poverty is not going to be able to provide quality education for their children by sending them to better schools or to college at all. The cycle simply continues for the children living in poverty who do not get the privilege of a better education, because without quality education their future income will be less and the probability of them staying below the poverty line will be increased.

There is a huge number living in poverty, in the United States today. This number affects our society because those without the means they need to educate themselves and their families are not able to contribute as much to society as they would if they had more money. It provides insight into the number of people in our society who are struggling to survive and provide for themselves and their families. A huge problem exists in our society in regards to this group of people, one that is important to recognize and act on if at all possible.

Sources:

U.S. Census Bureau Website: